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A Major Step For Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project

Anchorage, Alaska - The Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) achieved a significant milestone today by filing its proposed study plan for the Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project. The plan was submitted to the Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission (FERC), the governing agency responsible for licensing hydroelectric projects nationwide. When operational, the Susitna-Watana Project will provide an estimated 50 percent of the Railbelt's electricity by tapping the reliable, sustainable and dependable energy resource of the upper Susitna River.

The study plan includes 58 individual studies that will assess any potential impacts to the proposed dam site and surrounding area. The project site is located 184 miles up the Susitna River, above Devils Canyon. The plan is part of a rigorous licensing process that ensures the project meets stringent environmental and safety standards and demonstrates the state's commitment to developing the best project for Alaska.

"Over the last year we've worked closely with stakeholders and listened to the public in drafting this robust study plan," said Wayne Dyok, project manager. "We're committed to delivering cost-effective, reliable energy solutions that meet the urgent needs of Alaskans in a responsible manner. This plan is a significant step in that direction."

The Alaska State Legislature unanimously adopted a statewide goal of 50 percent renewable energy use by 2025. This project will significantly contribute to the state's ability to achieve this initiative and will complement other renewable energy projects across Alaska.

AEA will continue to work with stakeholders, including agencies and the public, by hosting workshops on the specific study plans in the coming weeks. Comments can also be filed directly with FERC through Oct. 15, 2012. AEA will submit an updated study plan in November, and FERC will issue its determination on the plan in December.

Visit Susitna-WatanaHydro.org to review AEA's plan.

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